

and known to have enjoyed
over twenty years of correspondence
with him,

one-half of the literary world
considers me an asshole

while the other half concludes
i must be one hell of a guy.

how very interesting.

you know, in all the decades
of studying and writing and teaching
and fatherhood and women and travel
and friends and enemies (few but powerful)
and economic realities,

it never occurred to me that this one
almost accidental connection
would loom so large

on my public opinion report card.

— Gerald Locklin

Long Beach CA

WALMART HAS EVERYTHING THAT A MAN COULD WANT

at the local walmart the
man in front of me is buying
some dowel rods, big ones
and the girl is having a
hard time sacking them keeps
trying to cram them into the
weak plastic and making little
faces of accommodation and the
man eventually leans over and
says thats alright honey ill
just carry them my wives
waiting in the car and im
going to beat her with them
the sack would just get in
the way he winks at her to
say, its just a joke and
walks on out, swinging one
of the dowels like a base
ball bat i can hear the
crack of her head now.